

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MANILA 07774 01 OF 02 201104Z
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INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 EB-07 HEW-04 AID-05 CU-02
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MANILA 7774

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: UNICEF
SUBJECT: UNICEF EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING (MANILA):
SPECIAL SESSION ON SITUATION OF CHILDREN IN ASIA

1. SUMMARY. THE UNICEF SPECIAL SESSION ON THE ASIAN CHILD COMPLETED ITS AGENDA EFFICIENTLY, WITH DISCUSSION ON DIFFERENT COUNTRY APPROACHES IN PROVIDING A WIDE RANGE OF ASSISTANCE TO CHILDREN. WHILE THE VIETNAMESE AND LAOTIANS MADE FREQUENT REFERENCES TO THE RAVAGES OF WAR AND NEOCOLONIALISM, THEY DID NOT MENTION THE U.S. BY NAME, AND ON BALANCE THEIR STATEMENTS WERE LOW KEY. THE SUBJECT OF LABOUISSSE'S SUCCESSOR HAS REMAINED IN THE BACKGROUND AND INDICATIONS ARE THAT IT IS LIKELY TO REMAIN SO. MONDAY, MAY 23, MARKS THE BEGINNING OF THE REGULAR UNICEF BOARD SESSION AND WE HOPE TO SPEAK AS EARLY IN THE SESSION AS POSSIBLE. END SUMMARY.

2. UNDER THE EFFECTIVE CHAIRMANSHIP OF DR. ALDABA-LIM, PHILIPPINE SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES AND DEVELOPMENT, THE SPECIAL SESSION ON THE ASIAN CHILD HEARD PRESENTATIONS BY A VARIETY OF ASIAN REGION COUNTRIES. THE SESSION WAS LIVELY WITH ACTIVE PARTICIPATION FROM THE FLOOR, PRIMARILY FROM OTHER ASIAN COUNTRIES AND UN SPECIALIZED AGENCIES. DEVELOPED COUNTRY UNICEF BOARD REPRESENTATIVES,
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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MANILA 07774 01 OF 02 201104Z

WHICH INCLUDED SWEDEN, JAPAN, UK, NETHERLANDS, FRANCE, CANADA, USSR, POLAND, FINLAND, FOR THE MOST PART STAYED IN THE BACKGROUND RECOGNIZING THIS PORTION OF THE SESSION AS AN ASIAN AFFAIR.

3. THE SPECIAL MEETING COVERED THREE SEPARATE BUT COMPLEMENTARY AREAS:

A. SERVICES BENEFITTING CHILDREN IN URBAN AREAS (PAPERS PRESENTED BY THAILAND AND INDIA);

B. SERVICES BENEFITTING CHILDREN IN RURAL AREAS (PAPERS PRESENTED B INDIA, SRI LANKA AND BANGLADESH);

C. AREA DEVELOPMENT APPROACH TO DELIVERY OF BASIC SERVICES FOR CHILDREN (PAPERS PRESENTED BY INDONESIA, PHILIPPINES, AND VIETNAM).

4. WHILE EACH PAPER DESCRIBED SPECIFIC AND WOMEWAT UNIQUE APPROACHES TO PROBLEMS OF MOTHERS AND CHILDREN, THEY WERE GENERALLY CHARACTERIZED BY COMMON ELEMENTS:

1. EMPHASIS ON DELIVERY OF BASIC SERVICES TO THE VULNERABLE POPULATION OF THE POOR;

2. ORIENTATION TOWARD INVOLVEMENT OF THE LOCAL POPULATION IN PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING THEPROJECTS;

3. PROVISION OF INTEGRATED BASIC SERVICES BY LOCALLY SELECTED AND TRAINED INDIGENOUS WORKERS--REPRESENTING THE CULTURE OF THE POPULATION TO BE SERVED;

4. RELIANCE ON LOCAL "SELF HELP" RATHER THAN OUTSIDE EXPERTS;

5. CONVICTION THAT SUPPORT OF OHE CHILTJEN HOLDS THE KEY TO THE FUTURE.

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PAGE 03 MANILA 07774 01 OF 02 201104Z

5. FOLLOWING EACH AERIES OF PAPERS, THERE WAS ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS BY EXPERTS AND GENERAL DISCUSSION BY DELEGATES. AGAIN THERE WAS WIDE DIVERSITY OF ISSUES AND SUGGESTIONS, BUT A GENERAL CONSENSUS SEEMED APPARENT ON A NUMBER OF FACTORS WHICH ACCOUNTED FOR PROJECT SUCCESS:

1. COMMITMENT ON THE PART OF THE LEADERS--OF THE PROJECT, OF THE COMMUNITY, AND, FOR AREA DEVELOPMENT, OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT;

2. TAILORING OF THE PLANNING AND THE TRAINING OF STAFF AND POPULATION TO THE SPECIFIC STIUATION OF THE COMMUNITY-- "NO INTERNATIONAL SOLUTION";

3. ACTUAL DELIVERY OF SERVICES TO THE POPULATION IN NEED IN AN EFFICIENT AND COMPASSIONATE MANNER.

6. MOST PROJECTS INCLUDED EMPHASIS ON FAMILY PLANNING--AN ISSUE WHICH WAS SUPPORTED BY MANY DELEGATES. AN EXCEPTION WAS THE DELEGATE FROM THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON WHO SUGGESTED THAT POPULATION CONTROL WOULD NOT BE SUPPORTED IN AFRICA. INTERNATIONAL AND BILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING USAID, WERE GIVEN LAUDATORY COMMENTS FOR THE MOST PART BUT DID COME IN FOR GENTLE CRITICISM FOR PROMOTING CERTAIN ACTIVITIES TOO STRONGLY, E.G. "INSISTING" ON SEPARATE MINISTRIES FOR FAMILY PLANNING, AND FOR PROVIDING EXCESSIVELY SOPHISTICATED AND EXPENSIVE EQUIPMENT WHEN SIMPLER METHODS WOULD SUFFICE.

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PAGE 01 MANILA 07774 02 OF 02 200941Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MANILA 7774

7. ANOTHER ISSUE WHICH SURFACED WAS ON THE UNICEF ROLE IN SUPPORTING NGO PROJECTS, WHICH TO MANY DELEGATES WERE MORE INNOVATIVE, MORE EFFECTIVE, AND LESS BUREAUCRATIC THAN GOVERNMENTAL PROJECTS. THE UNICEF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ANSWERED BY STATING THAT WHILE UNICEF ENCOURAGED THESE ACTIVITIES, IT COULD NOT AND WOULD NOT PROVIDE SUPPORT UNLESS APPROVED BY THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT INVOLVED.

8. THE LAOS AND VIETNAM PAPERS AND ORAL PRESENTATIONS DWELT ON THE DEVASTATION OF WAR BUT MADE NO MENTION OF THE UNITED STATES. THEIR PAPERS PRESENTED ACTIVITIES IN DEVELOPING INTEGRATED LOCAL SERVICES AS PART OF AN OVERALL NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PLAN. (COPIES POUCHED DEPARTMENT.)

9. IN A LOW KEY WAY, A NUMBER OF REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM DONOR COUNTRIES WERE MADE, ALONG WITH THE PLEA FOR SOME UNDERSTANDING OF THE UNIQUENESS OF EACH COUNTRY AND NEED TO INDIVIDUALIZE SOLUTIONS.

10. U.S. INTERVENED ONCE TO GIVE SOME PERSPECTIVE ON AID POLICIES AND PROGRAMS, AND TO COUNTER SOME CRITICISM IN A BANGLADESH EXPERT'S PAPER ON A VERTICAL "WORLD BANK AND USAID STERILIZATION PROGRAM." (COPY OF THIS PAPER ENTITLED "BASIC SERVICES DELIVERY IN UNDERDEVELOPING COUNTRIES: A CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 MANILA 07774 02 OF 02 200941Z

VIEW FROM GONOSHASTHARJA KENDRO" BY DR. Z. CHOWDHURY, ALSO POUCHED DEPARTMENT.)

11. UNICEF EXECUTIVE DIRECTORSHIP: SO FAR THIS SUBJECT HAS NOT HAD HIGH VISIBILITY. WE HAVE BEEN ASSURED BY UNICEF STAFF AND LABOUISSIE THAT THE MATTER WILL NOT BE FORMALLY DISCUSSED BY THE BOARD, AND THAT ORDONEZ-PLAJA WILL NOT PRESS FOR A FORMAL BOARD VOTE IN THE SELECTION PROCESS. OUR CONVERSATIONS WITH THE SWEDISH DELEGATION SUPPORT THIS VIEW, AND IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING MICHANEK WILL BE IN MANILA FOR ONLY A SHORT PERIOD (MAY 29-MAY 31) AND THUS HIS EXPOSURE WILL BE LIMITED. OTHER DELEGATIONS ARE AWARE OF THE TWO CANDIDATES, PARTICULARLY THW WEO COUNTRIES, AND HAVE FREQUENTLY RAISED THE SUBJECT IN INFORMAL CONTACTS, IN A LOW-KEYED FASHION. (A SAMPLING OF VIEWS: FRG -- GRANT IS A SHOO-IN; CANADA -- PREPARED TO BE CONVINCED; THE NORDICS -- FULL SUPPORT FOR MICHANEK.) WE HAVE FURNISHED INTERESTED DELEGATIONS WITH GRANT'S CURRICULUM VITAE AND HAVE QUITELY LOBBIED FOR HIM, STRESSING HIS COMPETENCE FOR THE POST.

12. 1978 UNICEF EXECUTIVE BOARD BUREAU ELECTION. AS ORIGINALLY CONTEMPLATED, FOLLOWING THE CLOSE OF THE REGULAR BOARD SESSION THERE WAS TO BE A SELECTION OF THE 1978 UNICEF EXECUTIVE BOARD BUREAU. THERE IS NOW SOME INDICATION THAT THE SELECTION OF THE NEW BOARD CHAIRMAN, PROGRAM AND ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIRMANSHIPS WILL BE DEFERRED AND MADE AT A LATER DATE IN NEW YORK TO PERMIT THE NEWLY APPOINTED COUNTRIES TO THE UNICEF BOARD TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SELECTION PROCESS (SIX OF THE TEN SELECTED MEMBERS ARE NEW TO UNICEF).
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Message Attributes

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